Published by the City of Lafayette
Fall 2003
Vol. 13, No. 4

LAFAYETTE VISTAS

A Field of Dreams for Lafayette Youths

CONTEST TO NAME THE NEW PARK

Now that the new park is nearing completion, it is time to give it a new name. The site has always been called "711" after the street address but it deserves a better name, one that will not be confused with a convenience store, and that reflects the nature of our community. So, get your creative juices flowing and submit your best ideas to our first-ever "Name the Park" Contest.

Name suggestions should be limited to one of the following categories:

- natural features, such as plant and animal life
- cultural features including archaeological and paleontological resources
- topographic or geographic features
- historic people, families or events related to Lafayette.

Send your name ideas to: The Lafayette Parks, Trails and Recreation Commission, 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette CA 94549 or e-mail them to the Parks and Recreation Director at **jrussell@ci.lafayette.ca.us**. The deadline for submittals is Friday, November 7, 2003.

The Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission will review all the nominations and recommend a short list of three or four names. This list will be published in the Winter *Vistas* and the Recreation Programs Brochure and the public will be encouraged to visit the City's website to vote for their favorite. The name with the most votes will be submitted to the City Council for approval. The winning name and the person who submitted it will be announced in the Spring *Vistas* and at the Grand Opening of the new park, which is slated for March 2004.

Youth baseball and soccer players in Lafayette scored a big win this month. The new facilities at the city park at 711 Saint Mary's Road are now substantially complete, although the grass still needs time to grow! That means that next season, there will be no more dodging gopher holes while running to catch a fly ball or tracking mud into Mom's minivan. With about $1.2 million from voter-approved State Park Bond Act funds plus local developer fees, the City was able to renovate the two baseball fields, add a large soccer field, pave the parking area, construct a snack bar/restroom building and plant extensive landscaping.

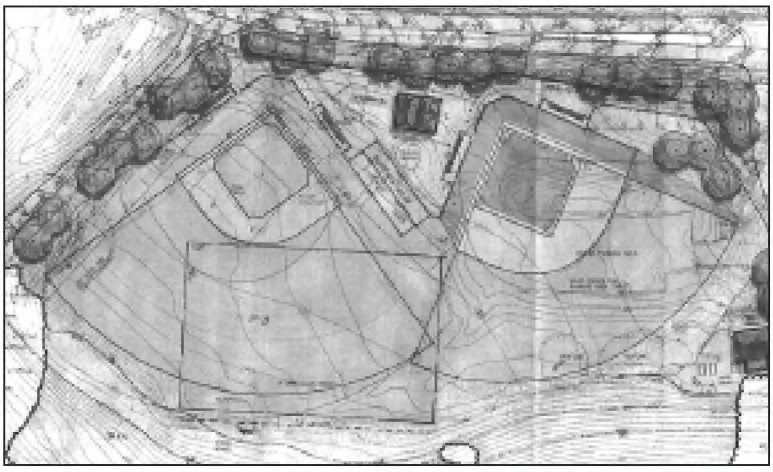
Local community groups were instrumental in making the new park a reality. The Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary Club adopted the park's small meeting room as a Community Service Project. They have re-painted the building and are in the process of re-doing the landscaping next to the building. Lafayette Little League also had a very successful fund raising campaign to pay for some essentials, such as bleachers, scoreboards, concession stand furnishings and dugout drinking fountains.

The sports fields will be used primarily by Lafayette Little League, Lafayette Moraga Youth Association (LMYA) soccer, and the Lamorinda Soccer Club (LMSC). Parks and Recreation Director Jennifer Russell says she also expects the fields to be used for sports camps and tournaments.

The grand opening of this wonderful park will be next spring as baseball season gets underway. In the meantime, the new sod and landscaping need the winter to get their roots down before play starts.

History of the Park

The 711 Saint Mary's Road Park has been a nucleus of recreational activity since the 1950's. Lafayette Little League was the primary developer — building and maintaining the baseball fields. In the early days, the property was owned by a non-profit organization called Lafayette Community Center Inc. They worked with the City to create a Master Plan that envisioned a youth center, a multi-purpose meeting room, off-street parking, play and picnic areas, and a community swimming pool and bathhouses. Unfortunately, due to budget constraints, that plan was never implemented. In 1973, the organization gave the property to the City with the stipulation that it always be used for recreational purposes.



Proposed Ballfield Plan for 711 St. Mary's Rd.

The small meeting building at the park was moved from La Fiesta Square in the late 1950's. When downtown, the children visited Santa there, and it was known as the Saint Nicholas Building. Now, it is often referred to as simply "The Hut."

In the late 1980's and early 1990's, a new Master Plan for the park was developed, underwent a number of public hearings and was approved by the City Council in June 1991. Although it took over 10 years to secure funding for the plan, the community's long held vision is finally realized!

Just Playing Around

Even in our hi-tech world, "going to the park" is still one of the most popular activities for today's kids. For young children, playground equipment offers a place for unstructured active, creative and social playing. Through imagination, the slides and swings can become places as exciting as Aladdin's cave, a pirate's ship, or a speeding fire engine.

Two years ago the city renovated the Brook Street playground by replacing 30-year old equipment. The new Pirate Ship structure has become wildly popular with both kids and parents and is a favorite place for birthday parties.

Brook Street Park

The Tot Play Area at Lafayette Community Center, used by hundreds of families every week as well as by the Tiny Tots and Kindergym programs is next. After fifteen years of constant use by playful, rambunctious preschoolers, the current equipment has started to show signs of age and needs to be replaced for the safety of our children. The Parks, Trails and Recreation Department is working with a local landscape architectural firm, Babcock-Hansen, to redesign the play area and new equipment is on the way with installation slated to start late this fall.

The comprehensive renovation will completely reconfigure the existing playground while preserving the most popular features. There will be seven new pieces of equipment, designed to provide a variety of play experiences, from active to imaginative. The theme for the new playground is transportation and will include a fire engine and station, a climbing structure, a playhouse, airplanes and a seesaw. The sand will be replaced by a poured rubber surface that will not only be cleaner and easier to maintain, but will also meet current laws for handicap accessibility and provide a more resilient surface to cushion falls. There will be a separate sand area for constructive play and the popular trike path feature will be enhanced.

The current project will cost an estimated $121,000, approximately half of which will be covered by the replacement fund to which the City contributes each year. Generous contributions by the Lafayette Juniors, the Lafayette Community Foundation and the Contra Costa First 5 Family Grant Program were received for the new Tot Play Area, which also made it possible to obtain a State grant which required non-city matching funds. Once again, Lafayette citizens made children a top priority.

Built-By-the-Community

Playground Proposal for the Lafayette Reservoir

Who better to design a playground than the kids who will use it? Observing the lack of good playgrounds at the Lafayette Reservoir a group of local moms took matters in their own hands and began researching how they could improve the situation. Their research led them to Leathers and Associates of Ithaca, New York, an architectural firm that has helped over 1,600 communities build unique, award-winning playgrounds based on the input of school children. Apparently, this technique works extremely well, as two of their projects – Hardy Park in Rockridge and Aquatic Park in Berkeley – were included in the Contra Costa Times last year as the top East Bay Playgrounds.

On October 23rd, designers from Leathers and Associates will meet with a selection of Orinda, Lafayette and Moraga grade school students to get their input. Hundreds of students will provide ideas and drawings of their "dream playground" and those ideas will be incorporated into the actual design. In Spring 2004, during a 5-day period, volunteers from the Lamorinda community plan to construct the playground in a communal barn-raising style, with meals and childcare provided.

While the volunteer labor will be crucial, it doesn't make the cost for design and materials disappear. In fact, the projected cost for this project is $125,000, all of which must be raised privately. The Lafayette City Council, upon hearing of this remarkable effort, was proud to be among the first donors, with a contribution of $5,000.

Simply put, without help, this project will not go forward. If you have young children, or have ever raised young children, you know the value of a great playground. Now, here's your chance to make it happen by donating to this project. Visit **www.reservoirplayground.com** or call (925) 284-7674 for more information and to lend your support. Something magical is going to happen at the reservoir. You'll want to be part of it.

Next Phase of Community Park Project:

Crossing the Bridge

In 1988, a Master Plan was adopted for the 68-acre Lafayette Community Park located at 480 St. Mary's Rd. Since that time, many of the facilities specified in the Plan have been built. The South End of the park includes a paved parking lot, a bridge across a little creek, two sports fields, a children's play area, a restroom, and a shaded group picnic area. Last year, a large bridge across Las Trampas Creek was installed connecting the Community Center to the North End of the park.

Development of the North End is the next project. Funding will come primarily from parkland dedication fees collected from housing construction. The area will be developed in phases over several years as these funds become available. As described in the Master Plan, the North End will be primarily large meadow-like spaces that preserve the quality of open space between the riparian zones and oak woodlands located at this end of the park. The plan also includes picnic areas, a restroom, and improved trails.

The process for implementing the plan has already started and the City has hired a consultant to oversee the process. Their work will include: a public outreach program of education about the current conditions of the park; a survey in the next issue of ***Vistas*** to determine the recreational preferences of Lafayette residents; community workshops and finally, a detailed layout of the North End development.

If you would like to see the Lafayette Community Park Master Plan, copies can be checked out at the Lafayette Parks, Trails & Recreation Office at 500 St. Mary's Rd.

South End Tot Lot

Clean Water Program... *Permit Requirements Continue to Change*

A little water never hurt anybody, right? Wrong. While rain itself is harmless and natural, the pollution that contaminates it during its journey over roads, parking lots, buildings and other urban structures is not. Urban stormwater is one of the most significant sources of pollution in our nation's rivers, lakes and estuaries. In fact, stormwater runoff rivals or exceeds discharges from factories and sewage plants as a source of pollution throughout the United States. Because humans create urban stormwater pollution, humans can reduce or prevent it through responsible, efficient urban design, public works, pollution prevention, and homeowner practices. One way in which cities are helping with this effort is by implementing the Clean Water Program requirements that are mandated by the State.

Starting in 2003, these regulations will become more stringent. All construction projects that create new impervious areas and paving projects of one acre or more will require additional treatment measures. In 2005, the regulations will again be tightened, with the threshold decreasing to 10,000 square feet of impervious surface area.

Please plan for these new requirements before beginning any construction projects by contacting the City of Lafayette Planning Division (284-1978) for review and guidance early in your project planning process.

You can also help prevent storm water pollution by adopting these everyday pollution prevention habits:

- ***Only rain in the storm drain***
- Schedule excavation and grading projects for the dry weather season.
- Never pour oil down a drain, on your driveway, in your street, into creeks or the Bay. Instead, recycle used motor oil and filters.
- Avoid the use of chemical pesticides & fertilizers, minimize irrigation runoff.
- Don't discard or sweep yard waste into the street, storm drains or creeks.
- Pick up trash and dog litter to prevent it from entering storm drains and creeks, potentially making people and wildlife sick.

Every day items that you have in your home are considered household hazardous waste. These include: paint and paint thinners, bleach and other cleaners, computer monitors and TVs, car products, aerosols, photo chemicals, pool chemicals, fertilizers, pesticides, and other toxic gardening chemicals.

Hazardous waste generated from households in Lafayette is accepted at no charge at the Contra Costa Hazardous Waste collection facility in Martinez. **Call 1-800-646-1431 for information and hours.**

Did you know ...

- Up to 80% of all storm water pollution is the result of improper residential practices.
- Many home gardeners use pesticides at 20 times the rate farmers do.
- About 90% of the insects on your lawn are not harmful.
- Pesticides can be harmful to your children or pets.
- One ladybug may eat as many as 5,000 aphids in a lifetime.
- 100% of the storm water that runs off into creeks, the Delta and the Bay is untreated.

HOME COMPOSTING—*Easier Than You Think!*

The most effective way, by far, to create healthy topsoil is by composting. By adding finished compost to your soil, you are introducing both the organisms and organic materials necessary to sustain the biological process that creates healthy soil. And the best part is, you don't have to purchase a manufactured product or artificial fertilizer — you can do it yourself easily! Home composting offers two great benefits in one — it's a great way to recycle yard waste and it will improve the health and appearance of your landscape. In addition, composting is also an important waste reduction tool that can help Lafayette meet State-mandated recycling goals.

How does it work?

Worms, bugs, fungi, and bacteria work together to chew up and break down the organic waste materials (leaves, grasses, etc.) that fall on the soil. The larger organisms break the organic material down to smaller size, while the smallest organisms, especially the bacteria, digest it and break it down even further to microscopic particles. This is how compost is made. When compost is placed in the soil, the small organic particles are "glued" to minerals in the soil, and together they form the crumbly, organic-rich soil in which plants grow best. Since this soil is loose and granular, plants can grow their roots with ease. In addition, the soil holds water like a sponge. The continued activity of the bacteria and other organisms in your soil make a wide variety of nutrients available to benefit your plants.

How do you get started?

The Home Composting For Busy People program offers free compost workshops at Orchard Nursery and other nearby locations. If you can't make a workshop, request the free 17-minute video entitled "Home Composting-It's Second Nature" to view in your home. The program also offers the popular BIOSTACK home composter for the reduced price of $45 and Norsemen Earth Machine Compost Bin for $30.20.

For additional information on home composting or other services call 906-1806 or visit **www.wastediversion.org.**

SURVEY SAYS...

We recently surveyed over 400 Lafayette residents to find out, among other things, if they read this newsletter and how they rate its quality. We then compared this information to a similar survey done in 1995.

The good news is that almost 90% of residents read *Vistas* today, which is more than twice as many people as 8 years ago. We took your suggestions about how we could make *Vistas* more interesting and as a result, the percentage of people who rated *Vistas* as "average" or better increased from 86% to 95%.

We are proud of this publication, and of the progress we've made. That is not to say, however, that *Vistas* can't be improved. If you have suggestions, please contact me at **TRobinson@lovelafayette.org,** or 299-3227. Thank you in advance for your interest and assistance.

– Tracy Robinson, Editor

Survey Results	1995	2003
Do you read *Vistas*?		
Yes	39%	86%
No	55%	13%
Don't Know	6%	1%
Rate the quality of *Vistas*.		
Excellent	13%	18%
Above Average	36%	34%
Average	37%	43%
Below Average	8%	2%
Poor	3%	1%
Don't Know	3%	2%

Cultural Coup for Lafayette

Lafayette culture hit a high note with the recent announcement that America's most acclaimed period-instrument ensemble, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, has selected the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church (LOPC) as its new East Bay venue. This world class ensemble, featuring internationally acclaimed musicians, regularly tours in Europe and just returned from an engagement at Lincoln Center. The group will have three performances in Lafayette during the coming season: Oct. 15 and Nov.15, 2003, and March 26, 2004.

For 20 years, Philharmonia has been enchanting audiences in the Bay Area. Their annual concert series is presented in San Francisco, Berkeley, Palo Alto and the East Bay. For the last several years, Philharmonia's East Bay venue was the Regional Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek. However, the rising cost of using that facility and the inability to book desired dates started Philharmonia's board looking for a new site. With warm, rich acoustics and a very personal environment LOPC is ideally suited for the intimate music that is the orchestra's signature.

Philharmonia performs Classical, Baroque and Romantic music on authentic instruments, giving audiences a unique opportunity to hear music the way it would have sounded when it was originally written by Mozart, Bach, Vivaldi or any of the other composers whose work they showcase. Nicholas McGegan, Philharmonia's Music Director, said, "We look forward to another terrific season. Whether it's the satisfaction of hearing a familiar work on authentic instruments, or the fascination of a new discovery, listeners are thrilled at each and every Philharmonia concert."

For a description of this year's concerts and ticket information call (415) 252-1288 or visit **www.philharmonia.org**.

Around Town

Oct. 26 **LAFAYETTE RESERVOIR RUN –** Mark your calendars so you don't miss out on Northern California's most scenic fun run! There will be a 10K and 5K run, as well as a 2-mile course for walkers and "the stroller brigade". Registration is $22 advance, $27 day of race and $17 for elementary students. Call the Chamber of Commerce at 284-7404 for more information. **Register on-line at www.lafayettechamber.org**

City Directory

For Council Members call: **284-1968**

Council Members

Carol Federighi	**Mayor**
Erling Horn	**Vice Mayor**
Carl Anduri	**Council Member**
Ivor Samson	**Council Member**
Don Tatzin	**Council Member**

Messages to **all** Council Members:
cityhall@lovelafayette.org

Administration

General Reception and	**284-1968**
Steven Falk, City Manager	**Fax: 284-3169**
Tracy Robinson, Admin. Srv. Dir.	**299-3227**
Gonzalo Silva, Financial Srv. Mgr.	**299-3213**
Joanne Robbins, City Clerk	**299-3210**

Community Development

Ann Merideth, Director	**299-3218**
Tony Coe, Engineering Srv. Mgr.	**284-1951**
Niroop Srivatsa, Planning Srv. Mgr.	**284-1976**
Ron Lefler, Public Works Srv. Mgr.	**299-3214**
P.W. Hotline (to report problems)	**299-3259**

If you observe illegal dumping in creeks & storm drains or accidental spills on roads, call Contra Costa Hazardous Materials Division 646-2286.

Lamorinda School Bus Program

Juliet Shanks, Analyst	**299-3216**
	Or 299-3215

Parks, Trails and Recreation **284-2232**

Jennifer Russell, Director	
Yvonne Ozorio, Senior Services	**284-5050**
Teen Programs	**284-5815**

Police Services

Emergency: 24 Hours	**911**
Police Dispatch: 24 Hours	**284-5010**
Police Business Office:	**283-3680**

Anonymous Tipline, Traffic Enforcement, Suggestions & LEARN (Laf. Emergency Action Response Network), 299-3232 X 2205

Fax	**284-3169**
Address	**3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. #210, Lafayette, CA 94549-1968**
Website:	**www.ci.lafayette.ca.us**

E-MAIL: Council/staff members can be reached via e-mail using this address format:
First Initial + Last Name @lovelafayette.org
Example: SFalk@lovelafayette.org

City of Lafayette
3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. #210
Lafayette, CA 94549-1968

PRSRT STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Lafayette, CA
Permit No. 161

Postal Customer
Lafayette, CA 94549

Printed on Recycled Paper